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Farm Broadcasters Letter

United States Department of Agriculture Office of Public Affairs Radio-TV Division Washington, D.C. 20250 (202) 720-4330

Letter No. 2574

September 4, 1992

REDUCING REGULATIONS -- Secretary of Agriculture **Edward Madigan** has announced nine more initiatives to improve the U.S. Department of Agriculture's programs and eliminate regulatory burdens affecting farmers, businesses and taxpayers. It is the third deregulatory package in five months, and brings to 36 the number of changes that are aimed at reshaping, rewriting or eliminating unjustified or no longer useful federal regulations. "We are taking specific actions to end unnecessary paperwork burdens imposed on USDA program participants," Madigan said. "Other changes will repeal rules impeding business decisions by individual agricultural producers. We are taking these steps to fulfill President Bush's directive that federal agencies streamline regulations to ensure that federal programs do everything possible to enhance economic opportunity and growth," Madigan said. **Contact: Roger Runningen (202) 720-4623.**

COMMENTS REQUESTED ON PROPOSED NUTRITION LABELS -- The U.S. Department of Agriculture is proposing to adopt a standard format to present nutrition information on labels of meat and poultry products. Comments are requested on two proposed labels, the "Control With Dietary Guidance," and the "Control With Recommended Daily Intake Range." "Control With Dietary Guidance" lists nutrients and includes dietary guidance, encouraging consumers to consider individual foods as part of a total diet. "Control With Recommended Daily Intake Range" lists nutrients and presents advice on daily intake of nutrients as a range. The formats were originally published in the July 20 Federal Register. Comments are due by Sept. 28 to: Hearing Clerk, Room 3171-S, Food Safety and Inspection Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250. **Contact: Jim Greene (202) 720-0314.**

AG EXPORT FORECAST UP -- The forecast for U.S. agricultural exports in fiscal year 1992 has been raised to \$41.5 billion, \$4 billion higher than last year's \$37.5 billion. It is the second highest export value ever, surpassed only by the fiscal year 1981 figure of \$43.8 billion. **Contact: Lynn Goldsbrough (202) 720-3448.**

RECORD FEED GRAIN HARVEST EXPECTED -- U.S. feed grain yields for 1992/93 are forecast at a record 2.65 tons per acre, eclipsing the previous record of 2.58 tons set two years ago. The record yield and a five percent gain in harvested areas are expected to boost feed grain output to 256.3 million tons, up 17.5 percent from last year. Larger supplies and lower prices is expected to promote higher use. **Contact: Tom Tice (202) 219-0840.**

COOPERATIVE INCOME UP, SALES DOWN -- Latest figures for U.S. farmer cooperatives show 1991 net income of nearly \$1.6 billion, 9 percent above 1990 figures, and combined sales in 1991 of more than \$76.6 billion, down from the record \$77.3 billion in 1990. Increased earnings of farm supply and dairy cooperatives were contributing factors to the higher net income. Lower business volume is attributed to lower prices from sales of milk and milk products. **Contact: George Martin (202) 720-6483.**

RETAIL BANANA PRICES -- The U.S.-average retail banana price during the first half of 1992 was 47 cents per pound, compared with 52 cents in the same period last year. Lower prices reflect larger imports. U.S. banana imports in the first quarter of this year were 1.6 million tons, 12 percent above a year earlier. A steady supply and larger U.S. fruit crops will likely keep downward pressure on banana prices. **Contact: Dennis Shields (202) 219-0884.**

LIVESTOCK AND POULTRY PRODUCTION -- Large grain and soybean crops in 1992 and lower feed costs are providing incentives to boost meat output. Livestock and poultry production is expected to be record high again in 1993. Modest increases in income should help maintain demand. Beef production is likely to increase one percent while record supplies of competing meats will hold prices down. Commercial pork production, projected at 17 billion pounds next year, will be only slightly larger as producers react to lower returns. Broiler production is expected to expand 4 percent in 1993, and turkey production will likely advance 2 percent above 1992 levels. Broiler and turkey retail prices are expected to be little changed from this year. **Contact: Leland Southard (202) 219-0767.**

KEEPING WEIGHT OFF -- Choosing the right weight-loss program for you is one of the keys to successful weight reduction. There are two basic weight loss programs. One imposes outside controls such as pills, or someone telling the dieter what to do. The other program helps people develop internal controls. The most successful programs teach people how to manage their food and exercise behaviors. "These programs help people learn to restyle their lives," says Sue Butkus, Washington State University Cooperative Extension nutrition specialist. "Instead of dieting and learning how not to eat, the person learns how to eat and choose foods for long-term health." **Contact: Sue Butkus (509) 335-2823.**

MORE CHROMIUM -- Studies conducted by scientists with USDA's Agricultural Research Service show that chromium in the diet helps to normalize blood sugar levels. The suggested intake for adults of this essential trace element is 50 to 200 micrograms per day. Studies also show that few people receive even the minimum amount. Chromium acts on the body's insulin-secreting cells, and makes insulin more efficient in handling the glucose, or energy, from a meal. Good sources of chromium are whole bran cereals, orange juice, and broccoli. **Contact: Richard Anderson (301) 504-8091.**

BACK-TO-SCHOOL LUNCHES -- Brown bagging lunch, whether to school or work, is becoming more popular. To assure that the food remains as safe as when it was prepared at home, Susan Conley, with USDA's Meat and Poultry Hotline, recommends taking three actions: Make sure the container is clean -- use a new lunch bag every day; keep hot foods hot and cold foods cold -- add a freezer gel-pack or cold drink to keep food cold, and use a good thermos to keep food hot; and wash hands before eating to remove bacteria. Conley also recommends packing a variety of food in the lunch during the week to improve the diet. Call USDA's Meat and Poultry Hotline 1-800-535-4555 to have your questions answered about packing a nutritious, safe lunch. **Contact: Susan Conley (202) 720-5025.**

*R-TV Fax: (202) 690-2165
Ag NewsFAX (202) 690-3944*

FROM OUR RADIO SERVICE

AGRICULTURE USA # 1839 -- Crawfish farming is beginning to catch on in the East. On this edition **María Bynum** visits a crawfish farm on Maryland's Eastern shore. (Weekly reel - 13-1/2 minute documentary.)

CONSUMER TIME # 1321 -- Citrus vs. cancer; the chromium surprise; pickles, the sequel; introducing spaceboard; producing leaner pork. (Weekly reel of 2-1/2 to 3 minute consumer features.)

AGRITAPE NEWS & FEATURES #1830 -- USDA News Highlights; Hurricane Andrew and Florida crops; farm machinery slump; export outlook; the Maricopa Agricultural Center. (Weekly reel of news features.)

NEWS FEATURE FIVE #1536 -- Big bucks bacterium; grasshopper virus; foiling fruit flies; citrus certification; bollworm biocontrol. (Weekly reel of research feature stories.)

UPCOMING ON USDA RADIO NEWSLINE -- Mon., Sept. 14, ag income/finance outlook, milk production report; Tue., Sept. 15, weekly weather and crop update; Wed., Sept. 16, fruit yearbook; Thur., Sept. 17, tobacco outlook; Fri., Sept. 18, U.S. ag outlook, cattle on feed. These are the **USDA reports we know about in advance**. Our Newsline carries many stories every day which are not listed in this lineup. Please don't let the lack of a story listing keep you from calling.

DIAL THE USDA RADIO NEWSLINE (202) 488-8358 or 8359.

Material changed at 5 p.m., EDT, each working day.

FROM OUR TELEVISION NEWS SERVICE

FEATURES -- **Patrick O'Leary** reports on the Researcher's Apprentice. **Lynn Wyvill** has a two-part series on teaching children about food safety.

ACTUALITIES -- **Betty Jo Nelson**, Food and Nutrition Service administrator, on emergency food assistance for Florida and Louisiana; USDA chief meteorologist **Norton Strommen** on crop progress and the weather outlook through November; USDA economist **Joel Greene** on agricultural exports; USDA economist **Tom Tice** on corn supplies and prices.

UPCOMING FEATURES -- **Patrick O'Leary** reports on Opportunity L.A.; **Lynn Wyvill** reports about crop research on annual medics; **DeBoria Janifer** reports on crawfish research.

EVERY OTHER WEEK -- **Agriculture Update**, five minutes of USDA farm program information in "news desk" format with B-roll.

Available on Satellite Galaxy 6, channel 23, audio 6.2 or 6.8, downlink frequency 4160 MHz.: Thursdays from 7:30 - 7:45 p.m., EDT, Saturdays from 10 - 10:30 a.m., EDT, and Mondays from 8 - 8:30 a.m., EDT.

OFFMIKE

THE NETWORK NEVER WENT OFF THE AIR...says **Don Molino** (Louisiana Agri-News Network, Baton Rouge). Broadcasts continued during Hurricane Andrew. Electric and cable lines were down in many areas, making radio communication even more valuable. Much of the sugar cane crop that had been planted will require replanting. High wind damaged the corn and soybean crops. Don says most of the cotton crop was in bloom and forming bolls, making it susceptible to rain damage.

ONE WORD...sums up the agriculture news in Mississippi, says **Bob Wade** (Progressive Farmer Network, Starkville) -- weather. Hurricane Andrew's path across the center of the state saved the crops in the northern section, while causing substantial damage in the southern portion. Bob says cotton is two-weeks behind schedule. A harvest in October would likely be in the rainy season.

STORAGE OF CORN SILAGE...is a hot topic in Wisconsin, says **Pam Jahnke-Welch** (WTSO, Madison). Producers tell her that the late developing crop is not likely to mature and will be harvested for silage. Many growers are considering concrete bunkers as storage containers for the crop.

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DEPLETION OF GROUND WATER...will be addressed by the Ogallala Aquafer Board established in Kansas. **Hap Larson** (KBUF, Garden City, KS) who covered the board's formation, says the study of the aquafer's reduced level will include alternate sources of water such as stream irrigation projects. Hap says milo producers are very concerned about the lateness of crop maturity. Harvest and freeze dates are matching.

NAFB...annual convention theme this year is "Professionalism First," says president-elect and convention chairman **Ken Tanner** (WRAL-TV/Tobacco Radio Network, Raleigh, NC). Panel subjects include "What drives activist groups," and "Responsibility for the environment." Keynote speaker will be **Edwin Newman** (NBC, retired). **Jim Yeary** (KKOW, Pittsburg, KS) will head a Nov. 12 news conference on meat exports. The event will be held Nov. 11-15 in Kansas City, MO.

ACCIDENT RATES INCREASE...during harvest. Rotating farm machinery can be especially hazardous at the end of a long, tiring day. Remind your audience about the benefits of taking the time to do it safely.

VIC POWELL
Chief, Radio and TV Division